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April 13, 2018

Senator Nancy Skinner (Chair)
Senate Public Safety Committee
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA

Dear Senator Skinner and Public Safety Committee Members:

AB 282 (Jones-Sawyer) would exempt from criminal prosecution aiding, advising, or encouraging physician-assisted suicide. The bill's authors allege that the bill is merely a "technical clean-up" to the Penal Code. In reality, AB 282 allows actions that the authors of the End of Life Option Act ensured the public would not be permitted—namely placing pressure on vulnerable patients to prematurely end their lives.

Medical literature indicates that up to 77% of people diagnosed with a terminal illness suffer from major depression. A study published in the *Journal of Clinical Psychology* found a "statistically significant association between clinical depression and the desire for hastened death." Under ABA 282, terminally ill patients—many of whom are suffering from depression, anxiety, and other mental health conditions—may be aided, advised, or encouraged to request and ingest a lethal prescription. Decriminalizing behavior that may lead someone to be talked into committing suicide is in direct conflict with the State's suicide prevention policies.

Moreover, the End of Life Option Act permits an "interested witness," including a beneficiary, to sign a patient's request for aid-in-dying drugs. AB 282 would allow an individual to legally aid, advise, and encourage a patient to commit suicide—and sign off on the method of suicide—while financially benefitting from the patient's death.

For these reasons, we urge you to oppose AB 282.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alexandra Snyder". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Alexandra Snyder
Executive Director
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